

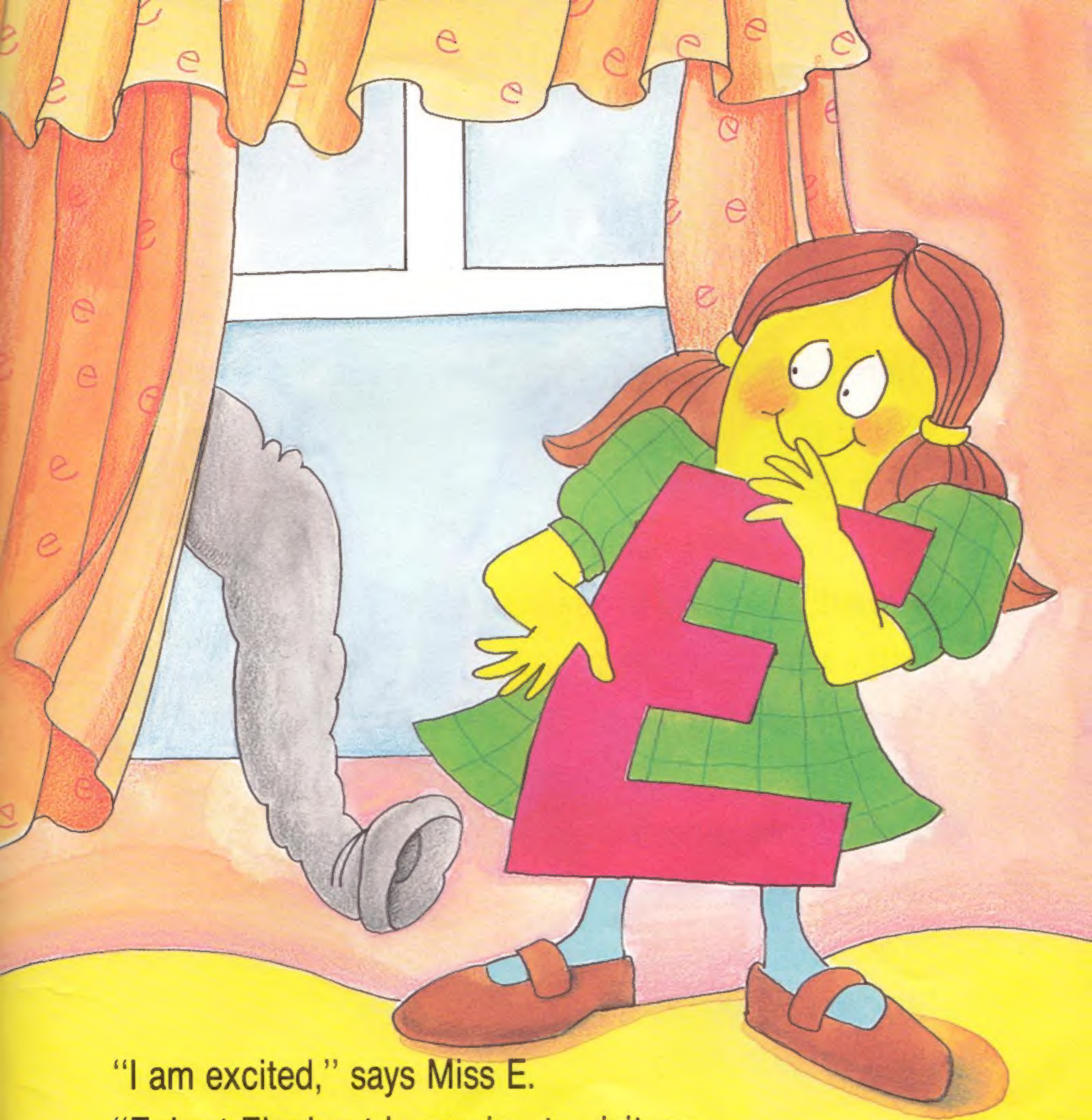
EXERCISE EXCITEMENT



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"I am excited," says Miss E.

"Egbert Elephant is coming to visit me.

I have not seen Egbert since he was a baby elephant.

Look! There's his trunk now, coming

in through my window."

Miss E pretends she does not know
it is Egbert's trunk.

"Here's the hose for my vacuum cleaner," she says.
Miss E picks up Egbert's trunk and makes believe
she is vacuuming.

Then she starts to laugh.

"Egbert, I am glad to see your trunk," she says,
"but I want to see all of you.

Come inside the house, the way you always did
when you were a baby elephant."

Miss E looks outside her window.

"Egbert!" she exclaims.

"You have grown to be a big, big elephant.

Stay where you are.

I will come outside."



Miss E rushes outside.

She and Egbert are very happy to see each other.

"Remember long ago when I was a baby elephant?"

Egbert asks.

"You thought of an act for me to perform
in the circus.

Now my baby daughter Egberta needs your help.

All the other baby elephants have acts
to perform.

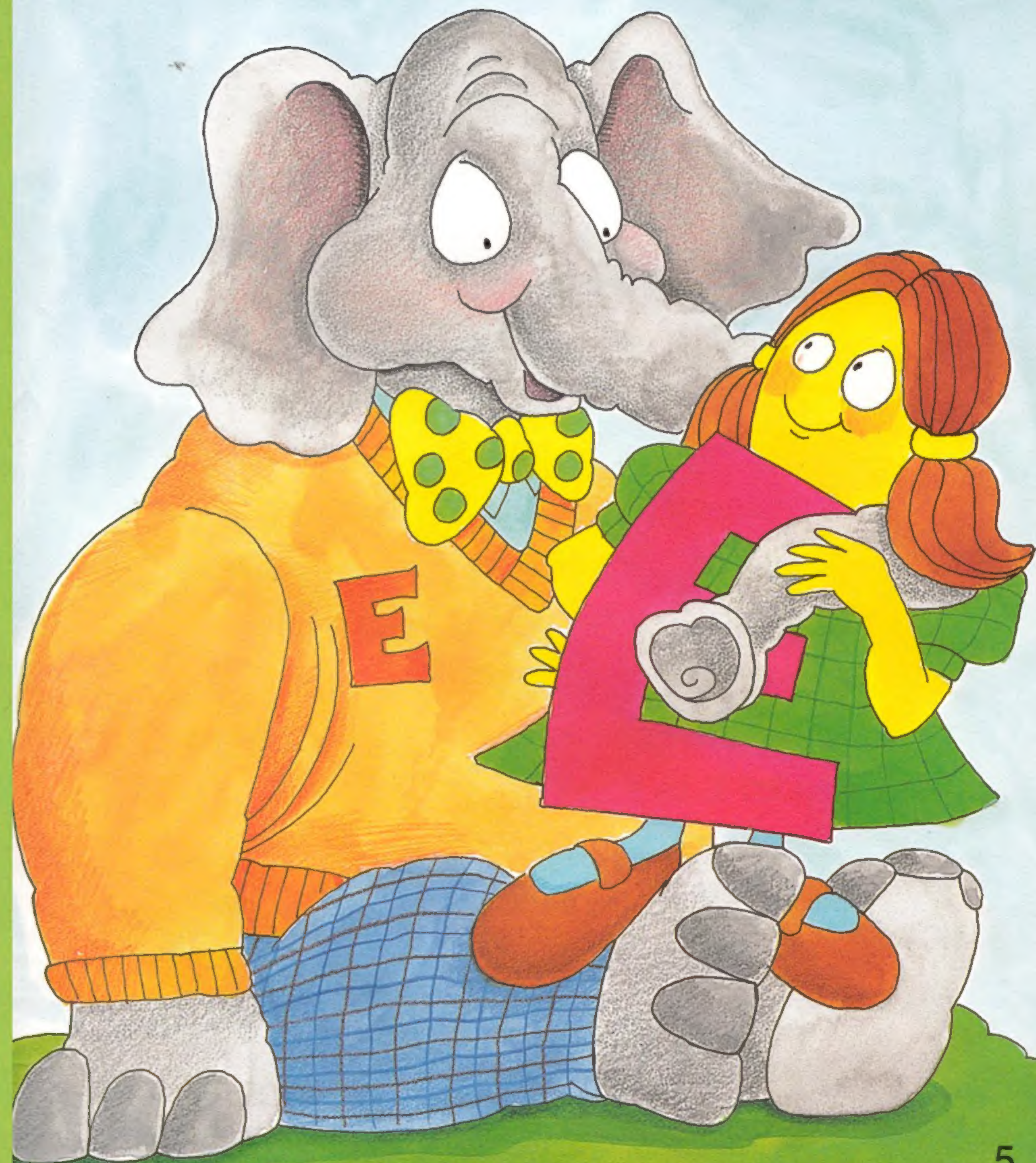
But Egberta does not have an act.

Can you think of an act for Egberta?"

"I know the exact act for Egberta," smiles Miss E.

She rushes into the house and quickly returns,
carrying a big box.

"Let's go find Egberta," says Miss E, as she climbs
onto Egbert's back.



Miss E and Egbert find Egberta at the circus.
“I came to help you think of an act to perform,”
says Miss E.
“I brought these things for you to use.”
“What will I do with a tablecloth, a lampshade,
and branches?” asks Egberta.
“When your father was a baby elephant,
he hid under the tablecloth and pretended
to be a table,” explains Miss E.
“He put the lampshade on his head and pretended
to be a lamp.
Then he covered himself with the branches and
pretended to be a tree.
He became a star at the circus.
You can perform the same act your father did,”
says Miss E.



"I am not my father," says Egberta.

"I am me, Egberta, and I do not want to perform the same act my father did."

"You are right," says Miss E.

"You are your own special person.

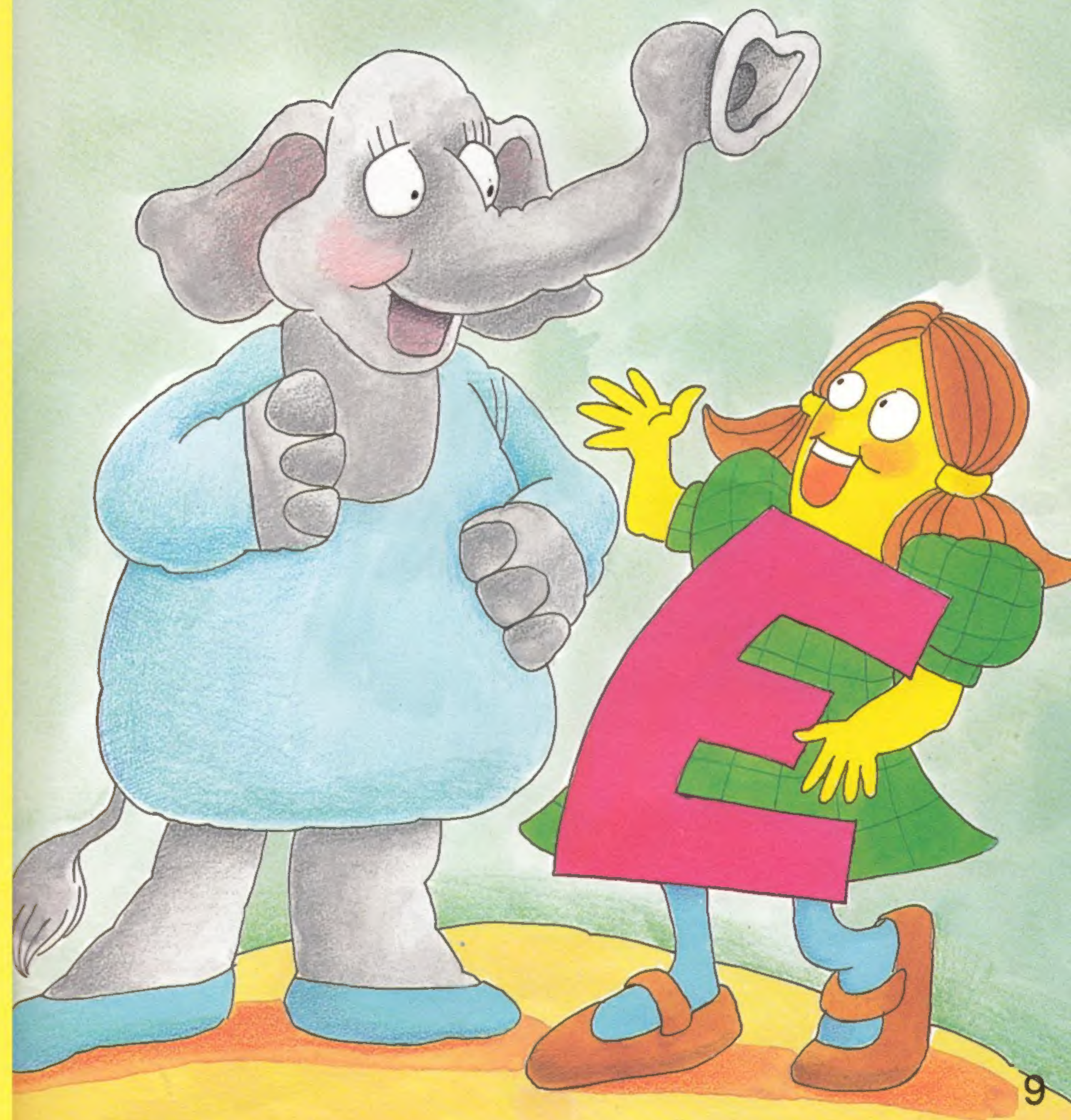
I will help you think of an act especially for you."

"I want my act to be exciting," says Egberta,

"but Elmer Elephant says girls cannot perform exciting acts.

Elmer knows.

He is the largest and strongest baby elephant."



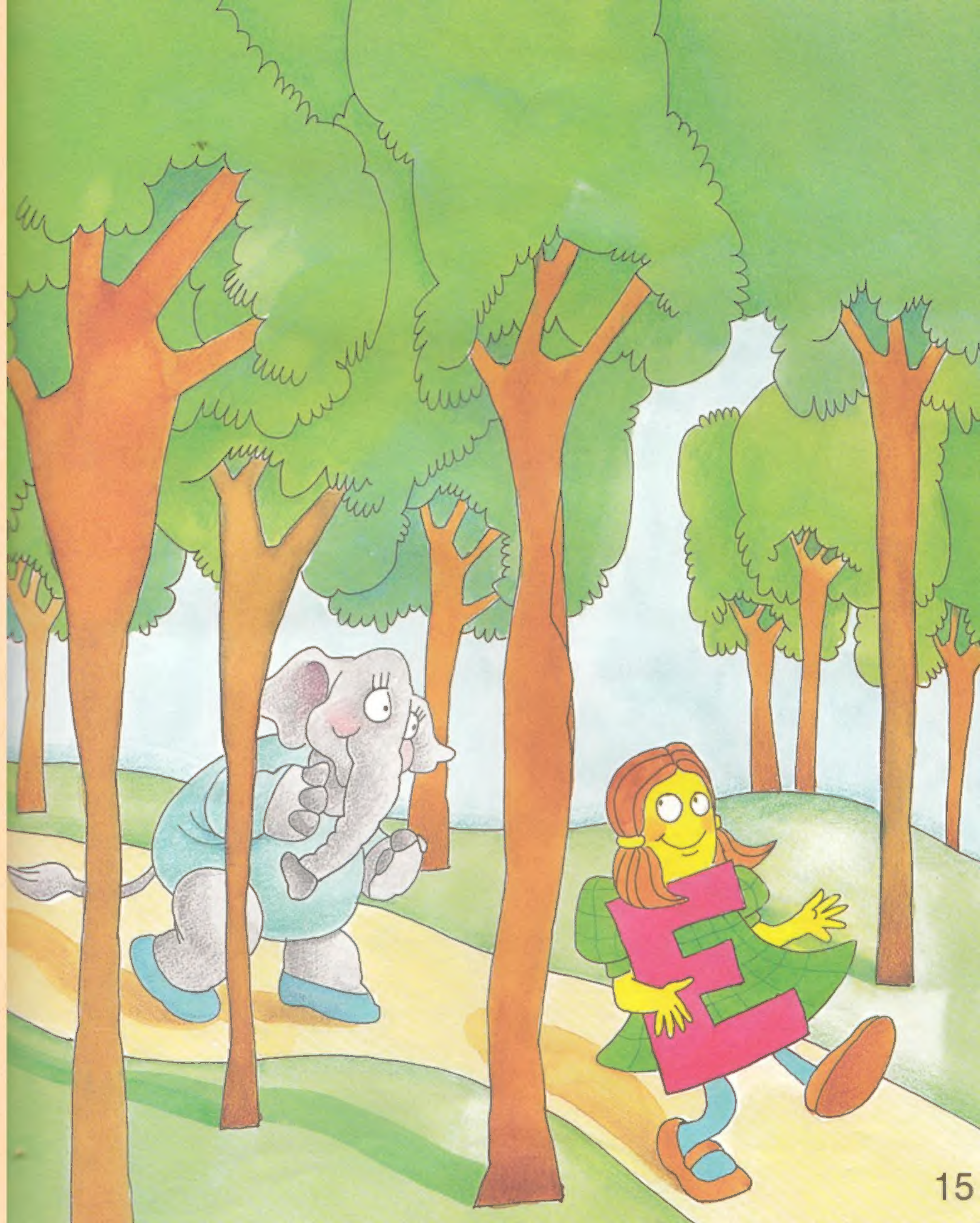
The circus owner hears Egberta.
“What Elmer says is not true,” she says.
“Anyone who learns an exciting act may perform it.
Watch Miss E perform tomorrow.
Then you will see a girl performing an exciting
exercise exhibition,”
says the circus owner.
“I do not want to watch,” says Egberta.
“Miss E is a letter girl, and Elmer says only
letter boys give exciting performances.”
“Egberta, don’t believe Elmer.
Come and see for yourself,” says the circus owner.
Egberta does not answer.



The next day the circus tent is very crowded.
Everyone always comes to watch Miss E,
the Exciting Exercise Expert.
Miss E looks all around the tent for Egberta.
Egberta is not inside the tent.
Miss E is disappointed, but she starts to perform.
She exercises and exercises.
Miss E performs the most exciting exercises
anyone has ever seen.
The audience claps and claps and claps.
“Miss E is an exciting exercise expert,” they shout.
“I wish Egberta were here,” thinks Miss E.



Each day Miss E performs at the circus.
“I keep hoping Egberta will come to watch me,”
thinks Miss E.
But Egberta is never inside the tent.
Then one afternoon as Miss E is leaving the circus,
Egberta follows her.
Miss E smiles.
“I remember when Egberta’s father, Egbert,
was a baby elephant.
He followed me home too,” she thinks.
“I’ll pretend I do not see Egberta.
I hope she’s ready to let me help her find
an exciting act.”



Egberta follows Miss E inside her house.
She touches Miss E with her trunk.
“Egberta, how did you get here?” asks Miss E,
pretending to be surprised.
“I followed you,” says Egberta.
“Every day I opened the flap of the circus tent
and watched your act.
I saw every exciting exercise you ever did.
Please teach me.
I want to be an exercise expert by tomorrow.”
“Tomorrow!” cries Miss E.
“Egberta, that is impossible.”



“It is not easy to be an exercise expert,” explains Miss E.

“An expert is the best.

You cannot be the best in one day.

You will have to practice with me every day.”

“I cannot do that,” says Egberta sadly.

“The circus is leaving Letter People Land tomorrow.”

“I’ll speak to the circus owner,” says Miss E.

Miss E dials the telephone.

She speaks for a long time.

She smiles at Egberta when she hangs up.



“Egberta, you may stay with me
until the circus returns to Letter People Land,”
says Miss E.
“I will set up a tent for you next to my house.”
“I will work very hard,” promises Egberta happily.
Egberta keeps her promise.
Every day, day after day, she practices with Miss E.



Then one day the circus owner telephones Miss E.
“The circus will be in Letter People Land next week,”
she says.

“Is Egberta ready to return to the circus?”

“She is,” says Miss E.

“And she has missed everyone.”

“Miss E, will you perform your exciting exercise
exhibition for us?” asks the circus owner.

“No, not this time.

Another exercise expert would like to perform,”
answers Miss E.

“I know who the new exercise expert is,”
smiles the circus owner.

“It will be an exciting surprise for everyone else,”
says Miss E.



At last it is the day of the exciting surprise.
Miss E leads Egberta into the center ring.
Miss E gives Egberta a big hug.
“You are the first baby elephant
to be an exercise expert,” she says.
“I will give an exciting exercise exhibition,”
says Egberta.
“You will be proud of me.”
“I am proud of you!” says Miss E.
“I want you to be proud of yourself.”



Suddenly the lights shine on the center ring.
Everyone is surprised.

"Why is a baby elephant in the center ring?"
people ask.

"Where is the exercise expert?"

"Here I am," says Egberta.

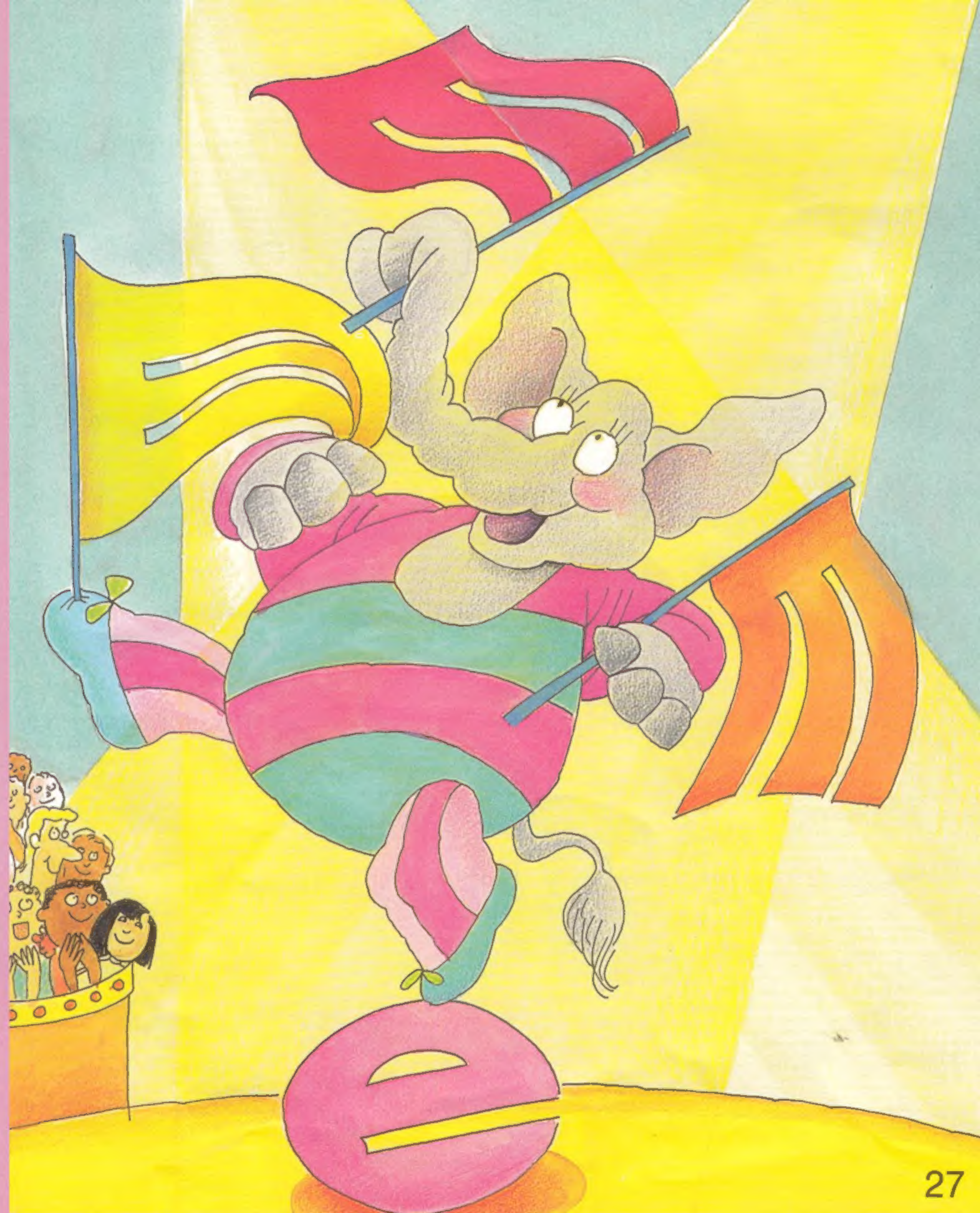
She starts to exercise.

She exercises and exercises.

"This is an exciting act," shout the people.

They cheer and cheer.

They throw flowers to Egberta.



The other baby elephants watch Egberta exercise and exercise.

They are very proud of her.

She is the first baby elephant to perform in the center ring.

Elmer rushes to Egberta.

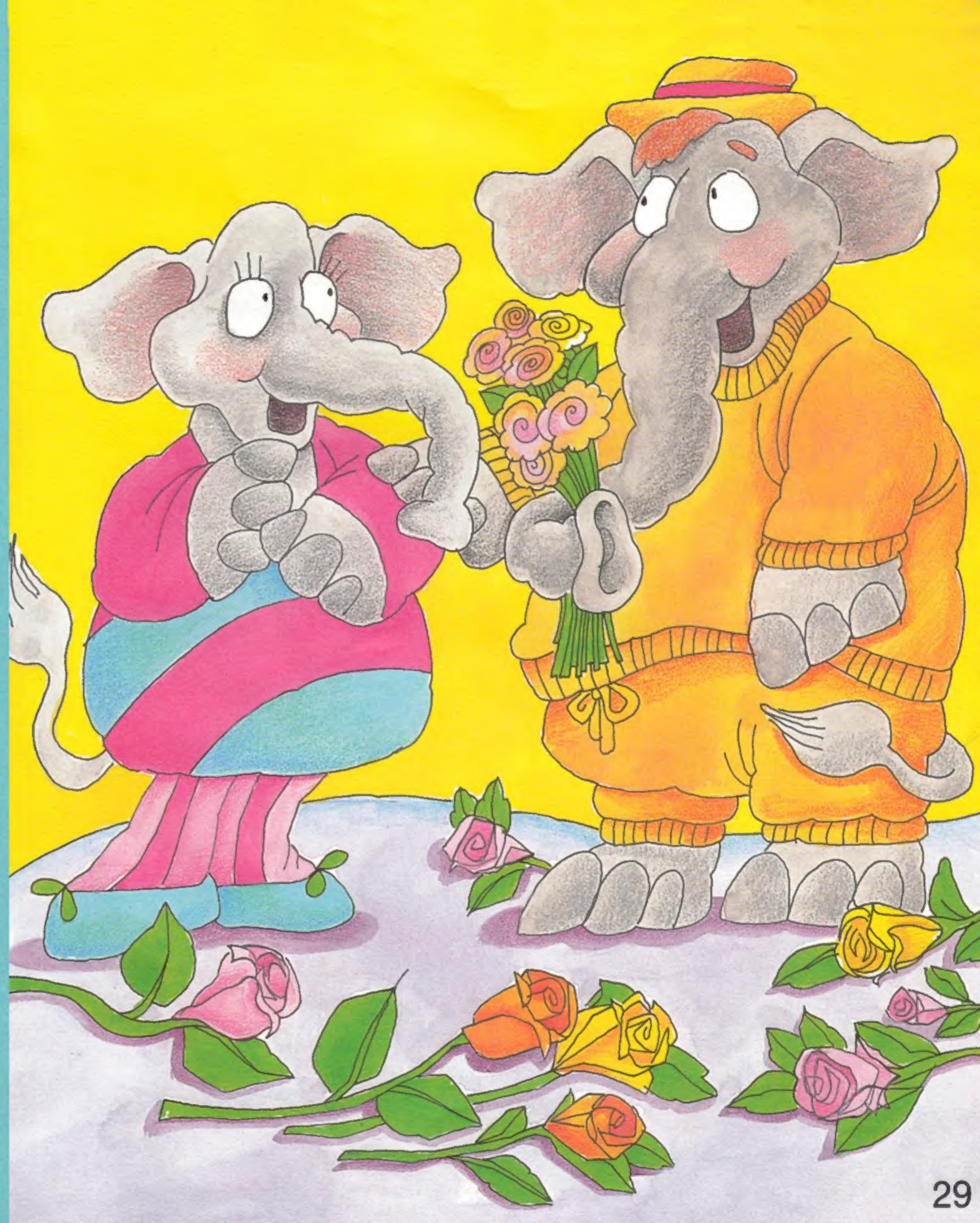
He is carrying a bunch of flowers.

“Egberta, your act is the most exciting elephant act I have ever seen,” exclaims Elmer.

“I was wrong.

A girl elephant can perform an exciting act.

Will you teach me to be an exciting exercise expert?”



Egberta winks at Miss E.

“Yes, Elmer, I will teach you,” she says.

“It doesn’t matter if you are a boy elephant
or a girl elephant.

You can do almost anything you want to do
if you really try.

Then you will be proud of yourself, the way you
should be.”

